

**S<sup>E.</sup> PAULS  
CONFESSION**

OF

**F A I T H:**

Or, A brief Account of

**His Religion.**

IN A

**S E R M O N**

Preach'd at *St. Warbroughs Church in Dublin,*  
*March 22. 1685.*

By *William Lord Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh.*

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8847-1488

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Preached at St. James's Church in London  
March 22. 1687.

By W. William Lord Bishop of Exeter and Bath.

Printed by J. Streater, in Strand, London, 1687.

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# P R E F A C E

## TO THE

# R E A D E R.

**S**INCE the Preaching of the ensuing Sermon, I find that both it, and the Author have undergone various Censures: some object Unseasonableness against it, and others Disloyalty; and for this Reason, being not willing to lye under that Imputation; and being conscious to my self, that I never entertain'd so much as a Disloyal thought, I am resolv'd the Sermon shall shift for it self: but I am a little more concern'd to satisfy the World, as to its seasonableness; because even some of my Friends seem unsatisfied. What needed you, say they, meddle with such a Subject? why at this time? Could you not let things run quietly? and be content to Preach (if you must be Preaching) the Principles and Motives of and to a good Life, without meddling with Controversies and Disputes?

I must confess, if these Principles, against which I Preach'd, had no Influence on Mens Lives, or were not pernicious to their Souls, I should be of their Opinion; but being convinced of both, this alone is sufficient for justifying what I have done. But I am resolv'd to be Ingenious with the World, and discover the true Motives that put me on this Subject. I found that one of the Clergy of Dublin, though a very Loyal Person; for his Imprudent meddling with the State,



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had been justly suspended by his Diocesan; and that the People (who seldom know or consider the true causes of things) thought this Punishment was imposed on him, for arguing for our Religion; the tender Sence they have for that, put them into mighty Fears and Despondencies, and made them reflect upon the Clergy; as if they must either decline the Defence of the Truth, which they value above their Lives, or be silent: I easily saw what ill effects such Surmises might produce: and although several private Clergy-men said enough to satisfy the People of the falseness of the Conclusion they drew from that accident; yet seeing them still dissatisfied, I consider'd, to remove their Jealousies, was a work proper for one of an higher Degree in the Church; and being invited to Preach at St. Warbroughs, where there is generally a very full Auditory; I was glad of the opportunity of discharging my Duty, and satisfying the People, and convincing many Roman Catholicks, who were then present to spy out our Liberty, that we had, and would take the same Liberty as ever to defend our own Religion, and to shew the Falshood of theirs; and I have some reason to believe, that what I then delivered had a good effect on their Minds, both as to the Government, and the Clergy.

But I must further tell these Gentlemen, That whatever Policy may seem to be in being silent at this time; it is too mean, and has too much of the World in it ever to be expected from a Clergy-man, especially it cannot from a Bishop, whose very Consecration obliges him to Preach and drive away all Erronious and False Doctrine, contrary to Gods Word, and both privately and openly to call upon, and incourage others to the same: Such we believe the Doctrines of the present Church of Rome to be; and while we do so, it is not to be expected that any Worldly consideration should prevail with us to be Silent; our Vows oblige us to the contrary; and the Charity which we owe to the Souls of Men, is a farther tie upon us, to warn them of the danger they bring on themselves by listening to such



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Doctrines, or persevering in them, though they have embrac'd them.

We are perswaded our silence in this case would prejudice our own People against Us, and the Truth, and flatter our Adversaries with hopes of our going over to them, and so confirm them in their pernicious Errors: Let who so will hold such Errors, Truth is Truth, and must be defended: And if the Romanists will but do as they would be done by, they cannot take this ill at our hands; especially, while we have not only the Law on our sides, but also the Word of that King (who is famous for having never broken it) to defend our Religion: and if they be angry for this, we cannot help it, Truth is dearer to us, than their favour.

We look on the Supremacy of the Pope, and his unjust Usurpation over Kings, and his fellow Bishops, as the fundamental Article of Popery: and it is required by the second Canon of the Church of Ireland, of every Preacher, to the utmost of his Wit, Knowledge, and Learning, to Preach against it four times a Year: And the Twelfth Canon further requires, That the Ministers in all their preachings, &c. shall teach the People to place their whole trust and confidence in God and not in Creatures, neither in the Habit or Scapular of any Fryer, or in Hallowed Beads, Medals, Relicks, or such like Trumperies. And while these Canons stand in force, we will, we must do our Duty according to them; and the Government would have just reason to take notice of us if we should omit it: And till I see better reasons, then I have yet heard, I must think my Sermon a very reasonable intimation of our resolution of being true and steady to our Laws, Oaths, and Duties, and that it will be impossible to withdraw us from those Principles of Religion which we profess, and upon strict and diligent examination know, not only to be true, but necessary also, even in such a degree as to concern the Salvation of Mankind.

And let the Romanists take it as they please, they must expect a great many such, and blame themselves that this does.

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does now appear in Print ; Because the false representation they made of what was then said, hath made this Publication of it necessary ; and these two following Letters written to me on that occasion hath convinced me of that necessity.

My very good Lord,

**Y**our Lordships late Sermon, Preach'd at St. Warbroughs Church in Dublin, has given me an occasion of representing the several Censures upon it to your Lordship, and withal of freely communicating my thoughts to you concerning it. The Gentlemen, who would pass for the only Catholicks in the World, censure it as disloyal, and tending to Sedition ; the Phanaticks are offended because you boldly tell them the Truth, and lay the blame of our present misfortunes (where it is justly chargeable) at their doors : and there is a third sort of Men, whom I may call the Politicians of the Age, that do not condemn, but only censure some things in it as unseasonable, and not fit to be Spoken in these times.

It was my misfortune not to be present at the Delivery of it ; but however, upon the experience of above thirty years acquaintance with your Lordship, I can vouch as much for your Loyalty as my own, and do really in my Conscience acquit you from any design of Influencing the People ; and when I reflect upon the saying of St. Paul, Gal. 1. 10. *If I please Men, I should not be the Servant of Christ.* I am well assured, you discharged a good Conscience towards God ; because you have been so little Sollicitous to Study the Satisfaction of the World.

However, because so many various Censures are past upon it already, and neither you nor I can foresee what misconstructions may be made of it for the future ; and because some things are reported of it, which I hear, were not delivered, to your prejudice ; I think you cannot do your self, nor your Sermon greater justice, than to expose it to the publick view of the World, and let it plead its  
cause



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cause against all Gainsayers: by this you will have an opportunity of vindicating your Loyalty against the Exceptions of the pretended Catholicks; your Prudence against the temporizing Politicians; and your Doctrine against all that are resolved to write against it: And I am confident, let them begin when they will, if you need Succours, the Cause will not want those that shall assist. I am,

Your Lordships

most Affectionate

Humble Servant

*A. Midenfis.*

*This was followed by this Second Letter.*

*My Lord,*

I Had the Happiness to hear your last Sermon at St. Warbroughs, and find by my conversing amongst the People, that it gave general satisfaction, and has done really a great deal of good. They imagine that your Lordship by your Station and Correspondence understands much of Affairs; and they generally conclude by your behaviour in that Sermon, That we are very secure in the Kings Royal Word. You would hardly imagine how far this hath quieted some suspicious Minds; and if your Lordship would let your self be prevailed with to make it publick, I am confident it would contribute yet more to secure the Loyalty, and quiet the fears of the People: and though this may seem unnecessary to your Lordship, it being impossible any one of our Communion should be disloyal, without renouncing his Religion; yet give me leave to inform your Lordship, that there neither doth, nor will want those, that having nothing to say

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say to it, as it is, will not fail to misrepresent it: To prevent therefore them, if not to satisfy your Friends, I hope you will be persuaded to comply with the request of,

My Lord,

Your Lordships most humble

and dutiful Servant,


W. King.

*From these two Letters the Readers may see the sence of both Adversaries and Friends, and what effect it had on them, and especially the People; and by publishing of it, I hope at least, to get this advantage, that our Adversaries will be afraid to misrepresent future Discourses of this kind, when they see we have so ready and short a way to expose their Lies: And let them rest satisfied, that notwithstanding their causeless heights, and the confident brags of some of them, That our Religion shall soon be suppress'd; and the wheedles of others of them, by which they think to prevail with us, if not to come over to theirs, yet to speak nothing in confutation of it; we both dare and will justify our Selves and our Religion against all the little petty arts of Defamation or Calumny they can use against us; and that we believe the chiefest of their strength consists in these.*

*I have only this one thing more to add, That this Sermon is printed as it was preached, without any alteration; and that it is own'd as the true sence and real expression of the thoughts and heart of the Preacher.*

St. PAUL's





## St. PAULS Confession of Faith.

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Acts 24. 14, 15, 16.

*But this I Confess unto Thee, that after the way which they call Heresie, so Worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are Written in the Law and the Prophets; and have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and Unjust. And herein do I Exercise my self, to have a Conscience void of offence towards God and towards Man.*

**T**Wo things are required in a Preacher, to be able to Exhort with wholesome Doctrine, and to confute Gain-sayers; the one requires Rhetorick, the other Logick. We cannot have a better Precedent for this than St. Paul; whom for his admirable Elocution the Infidels took for Mercury, their God of Eloquence, come down from Heaven; and for the profoundness of his matter, he is stiled a *chosen Vessel*, to contain the Mysteries of Gods Kingdom: for proof of this, I will only instance to you from the 33<sup>d</sup> of the 8<sup>th</sup> of the Romans, to the end of that Chapter, whereof \* St. Austin and \* Erasmus say, that never Tully nor Demosthenes could speak any thing like him; there being nothing mean or low in the whole; for if we respect the Persons, here we have God, Christ at the right hand of the Father, Principalities and Powers; if we respect the things, here we have Life, heighth, depth, things present, and things to come: and if we respect the Rhetorical Ornaments, what Interrogations,

gations, what Gradations, what Antitheses, what contraries, and what repetitions? so that this might justly make up the 3d part of St. *Austins* wish, that he had seen Christ in the flesh, *Rome* Flourishing, and St. *Paul* Preaching. But I need no further Arguments, this very conflict with *Tertullus* is a sufficient demonstration; whereof my Text is a part: for having clear'd himself from that most odious crime of Sedition, and evidently proved that the Orators Accusation was not only improbable, but impossible: he now descends to the other branch of his Calumny concerning his Religion; that as he was no turbulent Fellow, nor raiser of Sedition in the Common-wealth; so he was no setter forth, nor maintainer of Heretical Doctrines, or Novelties in the Church.

In the words we have these two parts.

1. His Concession, in these words, [*but this I confess.*]
2. His Confession, in these words, [*after the way which they call Heresie, &c.*]

And in his Confession we have these particulars;

1. The Act, *I Worship.*
2. The Object, *The God of my Fathers.*
3. The Manner, *after that way which they call Heresie.*
4. The Rule of it, *believing all things that are Written in the Law, and the Prophets.*
5. The Principal ground of it, *and have hope towards God, that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead.*
6. And lastly, the Effect of it, *and herein do I exercise my self, to have always a Conscience void of offence toward God, and toward Man.*

So that if you would have a clear and perfect definition of St. *Pauls* Religion, it is briefly this; *A Worshipping of one true God by Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures, with a stedfast endeavour to keep the purity of the Conscience unspotted, in hopes of the future Resurrection of the Dead.* But to proceed.

1. Of his Concession, but I confess.



From which Ingenious Confession of his Faith before an Heathen, we may learn our own Duty; *whosoever will* Matt. 10. *confess me before Men, him will I confess before my Father* 32. *which is in Heaven:* and with the Heart *Man believeth unto* Rom. 10. *righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Sal-* 10. *vation.* *Isaiah* Prophefied of the times of the Gospel, *that* Ch. 44. 5. *one should say, I am the Lords, and another should be called by the name of Jacob; and another should subscribe with his hand, and name himself by the name of Israel:* and 'tis requi- Pbil. 2. 10. *red, that not only every Knee should bow; but also that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.* The want of the means of this publick confessi- Psal. 137. *on made the Jews lament when they sate by the Rivers of Babylon; and made Jeremy cry out, that the ways of Zion* Lament. 1. *did Lament, because no Man cometh to the publick Assemblies.* 4. And the Thief on the Cross, for confessing Christ, was that day with him in Paradise: for the inward frame of the Heart is discovered by outward Devotion; and he that does not confess his Religion when he is put to it, either has none at all, or does not much care for it. God says not, I have reserved 7000 that have not believed in Baal, but whose Knees have not bowed to Baal; which shews, that he expects a publick owning of him, as well as a secret believing in him; and the Devil himself did not tempt Christ to believe in him, but to fall down and Worship him; and the three Children chose to be burned, rather than give Adoration to Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image.

I know Naamans example [*when I bow myself before the* 2 King. 5. *Idol Rimmon*] is much objected against what I have said; but for answer to this, consider first, that Naaman was then but a Novice in Religion, and had not yet learned to deny himself for God. 2. Naaman speaks not of any Religious Worship to be performed to Rimmon; but of a civil Office to be done to his Prince. 3. Because Naaman knew that this Action could not but be scandalous to

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others, and polluted with the circumstance of time and place, he confessed it was a sin, and desires Gods mercy. Lastly, we do not find that *Naaman* ever did it, but only feeling or fearing his own infirmity, he desires the Prophets Prayers, either that he might not fall, or if he did that God would forgive him; to which the Prophet assents, and that only in such a form of speech, as is an usual valediction, as Go in peace, or Gods peace be with you.

There are two main impediments of this publick Confession of Christ, Shame and Fear. They that are ashamed, are such as love the Praise of Men more then the Praise of God. When *Ulysses* taught young *Neoptolom* the Art of Lying, the youth being of an ingenuous nature, ask'd him, how it was possible to tell a Lye without blushing; he answered him, that a man ought never to be ashamed of any thing, whereby profit may be had. And if we seriously consider it, 'tis strange that any Christian should be ashamed of his Profession, which brings him so great gain, as an eternal weight of Glory. We have a common proverb, that he that is ashamed of his Trade, shall never thrive by it; and 'tis altogether a true, that he shall never save his Soul by Religion, who is ashamed to profess it. 'Tis confess'd, the time was, when *Nicodemus* came by night to Jesus; and when *Joseph of Arimathea* was a secret Disciple; but it was when they were punies in Christianity: but when Religion was firmly rooted in them, they joyned openly in the honorable Interment of our Saviour; and thus St. Paul confesses *Rom. 1. 16* he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

The second impediment is Fear; This caused *Moses* to stagger at the Commands of God; this made *Elisha* flee from the Womanish threats of *Jezebel*, and St. Peter deny his Master. Fear is so bad a Counsellor in the Service of God, that *Gideon* when he was ready to joyn battle with the Enemy, proclaimed, that whosoever was fearful



ful should depart; and so timorous Christians are not fit to Fight the Lords Battles: therefore 'tis said, *the Fearful, Rev. 21. and the Unbelievers, and the Abominable, shall have their Portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone.*

I never heard nor Read of a more resolute Band of Soldiers, then those Seditious followers of *Cataline*, their Souls flitted from their Bodies before they moved from their Stations; and the place they Fought on when alive, they covered with their Bodies when Dead: and the Historian tells you, the reason was, because they carried their \* Riches, their Glory, their Life, their Liberty, their Country, and all their hopes in their right hand. Change but the Persons and the Story is outs; for in our Christian Warfare we bear a Crown of Glory, Eternal Life, Spiritual Liberty, and our Heavenly Country in our right hand, and to him only that overcomes, shall all this be given: *For be thou Faithful to the End, and I will give thee the Crown of Life.*

*Salust.*

*Bello Catalini.*

\* *Divitias, Decus, Gloriam preterea libertatem, atque patrium, in dextris vestris portate.*

*Rev. 2. 10.*

Yet neither *St. Pauls* Practice, nor my Discourse, does encourage any to run into unnecessary dangers; for he that loves Danger, shall Perish in it. To precipitate a Mans self into needless Peril, is senseless Folly; and to do it out of ostentation, is meer vanity: But when a Mans Profession obliges him to give Evidence for the Truth, to be then neither ashamed of Christ, nor of his Gospel, nor fearful to suffer for it, is necessary true Christian-Courage.

The Antient Law of governing the *Roman* Army was reduced to two heads, *nec sequi, nec fugere*; not too venturesomely, to make a rash pursuit without need; and when there was occasion, nor by too timorously running away to betray the cause to the common Enemy: and thus a Christian ought not to seek danger when he is free, nor to shun it when it is offered. Behold, says Christ, *I send you forth as Lambs in the midst of Wolves, be ye therefore wise as Serpents, and Innocent as Doves.*

There is a time when the Advice of *Gellius* takes place even

even in Religion; that when the City labours with Sedition, 'tis not the part of a good Citizen to profess himself a Newtēr, but to joyn with the party that has right on its side, and so help to suppress the other; and again there is a time, when the Example of *Leontius* Bishop of *Antioch* is more imitable: that is, to give offence to neither party; for *Wisdom is justified of her Children*. And thus much of the first thing, viz. the Concession, in these words, [*but this I confess.*]

Before I speak of the Confession, which is the next thing, I will only remark this to you; that *St. Paul* first clears himself from being a Rebel against the State, before he attempts to prove the Orthodoxy of his Faith, or the Purity of his Religion: From whence I desire you to observe, that those men that profess never so much of Religion with never so much of Zeal, are to be lookt upon as false Teachers, so long as they continue their rebellious and seditious practices against the State: and therefore let our dissenting Brethren take notice, that while they in contempt of Authority oppose the establish'd and known Laws, by their Riotous, unlawful Assemblies, that their Religion and Profession of Faith is false and erroneous, and quite contrary to *St. Pauls* here in my Text: which is the next thing I am to handle, in these words, [*I worship the God of my Fathers, &c.*]

And in this I shall first speak of the Act *Worship*, and in doing thereof, I will not spend time in confuting that frivolous distinction of the Papists, of *Latria*, *Dulia*, and *Hyperdulia*; the first they say, is that Worship which is proper to God; the second, which is due to the Creature; and the third of a middle nature, less than what is due to God, and more than is due to the Creature, and this (they say) is only due to the Virgin *Mary*. I know they have borrowed this distinction from *St. Austine*; but have much wrested it from his sence: For as they have added a third member to the distinction, (to wit) *Hyperdulia*:  
so

so it is certain, that *St. Austin* by *Dulia* did not understand any religious or spiritual Worship, which is only due to God; but an External civil Worship, such as men give to Princes, Masters, and Pastors: \* a service of the Body, but not of the Mind, as *he* speaks.

*Servitus  
corporis  
non animæ.  
de vera Re-  
lig. c. 55.*

The Saints indeed are to be honoured for Imitation; but not to be adored for Religion. Neither does that *Father* say, that Saints are to be Worshiped with an inferiour kind of religious Worship, called *Dulia*; but they express contrary; for *we honour them* (says he) with the honour of Love and Fellowship, as our Brethren and Friends: but not with Service, as our Masters and Commanders.

*ibidem.*

*Honoramus  
eos Charitate,  
non  
Servitute.  
ibid.*

We do not deny that there are degrees of Honour: but to attribute the least degree of the Service of the Spirit to any Creature, we abhor, because that is solely due, and proper to God, who only, in all times, places, and things sees, guides and disposes of all, us, and ours. God is not mocked; and therefore will not suffer his own express Word to be eluded with such frivolous distinctions.

But as one complained, that the Laws were like Spiders Webbs, wherein the little Flies are taken; but the great ones break through; so we may say of these Popish Subtilties, because, that though they cannot cast a mist before the eyes of God, and rational considering men, yet they may deceive the poor simple Lay Papist; who goes on roundly to work in his blind Devotion, *he*, poor man, must needs remain intangled in gross *Idolatry*. And therefore these Popish Ring-leaders are not unfitly compared to *Bawds*, (it is King *James* his expression in the like case) who though they do not actually pollute their own Bodies; yet are a means of prostituting others to all filthiness. But I leave them and return to our Apostles [*I worship the God of my Fathers,*] This Worship is twofold. 1. External. 2. Internal. The external Worship is principally threefold.

1. The preaching and hearing of Gods Word.

2. The



2. The invoking of his Name!

3. The reverend use of the holy Sacraments!

1. As to the preaching and hearing of Gods Word, he requires nothing more earnestly, than that the People be taught the knowledge of themselves, of God, and of Religion; *Son of Man*, saith God, *cry aloud and spare not, lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, and Go and Teach all Nations*, saith Christ; and *Wo is me*, saith the Apostle, *if I preach not the Gospel*; and he charges *Timothy before God*, and *before the Lord Jesus Christ*, *who shall judge both the quick and the dead, that he Preach the Word, and be instant in season, and out of season.*

*Isai. 58. 1.*

*Matt. 28.*

*1 Cor. 1.*

*16.*

*2 Tim. 4.*

*11. 2.*

*Rom. 10.*

*14.*

*Prov. 29.*

*18.*

*Mark 6.*

*34.*

And as Preaching is the Ministers Duty, so it is the Peoples to hear: *for how can they believe in him, of whom they have not heard: and where there is no Vision, the People Perish.* Faith is like the Lamp, and the Preaching of the Word like Oyl; and as the Lamp without a fresh supply of Oyl does go out, so Faith does decay without Preaching: wherefore it is written of our Saviour, that when he found a Multitude without a Pastor, *he was moved with Compassion towards them.*

*Psa. 50. 15.*

*Exod. 32.*

*10.*

*James 5.*

*16.*

*Psa. 53. 2.*

The second part of this external Worship is Invocation of his Name; and this is so natural to us, that we usually lift up our Eyes to Heaven in any suddain exigence, even before we consider the danger, or consult our reason; and God commands us to call upon him *in the day of trouble, and he will hear us.* This is so prevalent that it binds up the hands of the Almighty; *Let me alone*, saith God to Moses, *that my Wrath may wax hot against them.* No marvel then that St. James says, *the Prayer of the Faithful availeth much, if it be fervent.* In a word, he that does not Pray, is an Atheist; for David saith, that only the Fool, *who saith in his heart, there is no God, doth not call upon the Name of the Lord.*

I fear, if measures were taken of our being or not being Atheists, by the frequency of our Prayers, there are too many

many amongst us, that could scarcely free themselves from that imputation: unless to come to this place once or twice upon a *Sunday*, and that too, more out of custom, than Devotion, and never to think more of their Duty till *Sunday* come again, does acquit them from that charge. But remember, God will be called upon; or he will not deliver.

The third part of this External Worship is the reverend use of the Sacraments; and let me tell you, they are not indifferent things, which we may use, or not use, at our pleasure; as *Esther* said, *If I perish, I perish*. There is a more Christian [*If*] in the case, that is, If we obey the Commands of Christ, we must use them; for he sayes, *Go teach all Nations, Baptising them, and take ye, eat ye, drink ye.* Mat. 28.  
Mat. 26.  
2. 27.

*Licurgus* the *Lacedemonian* Lawgiver (to oblige them to a more strict observance of his Laws) made the *Lacedemonians* take an Oath to observe them till his return, and then took a journey, with a resolution never to go back again: and caused his Ashes to be thrown into the Sea, lest his People finding them, should think themselves absolved from their Oath.

And thus, our Saviour Jesus Christ being to leave his Disciples, obliges them to the use of his Sacraments, till his return, never intending to return again in humility, but in glory: If a dying Friend should give you a Ring as a token of his Love, and charge you to keep it for his sake, would you despise an instance of so great Kindness? How comes it then to pass, that we so little value so inestimable a Jewel, as the blessed Sacraments, which are the Badges of our Christianity, whose Value and Dignity does not flow from the outward Elements? For what is the sprinkling of a little Water? the eating of a bit of Bread, or the drinking of a sup of Wine? but from the Ordinance and Institution of Christ, just as a piece of Wax with the Kings Broad Seal stamp upon it, is of more value,

lue, then a thousand times so much in the Merchants Shop.

And truly, if we would be taken for Christ's Soldiers we ought not to be ashamed of his mark, the Holy Sacrament of his Body and Blood.

There are two things generally objected by many that are called Christians, against receiving of it; the one is, that if they partake of it unworthily, it will prejudice them: Such would do well to consider; that until they put themselves into a condition of Receiving it Worthily, they cannot be in a condition of dying; and how dangerous it is not to be always so, the uncertainty of this life does shew.

**I** The other Objection is, That they are not yet willing to part with their Sins, to which the Receiving of the Sacrament obliges them; and therefore they will defer Communicating until they are Old, and have a mind to repent, and part with their Sins. Such would do well to consider that they may fall short of the time, they design for that Work; or if they should not, that God may not give them then Grace to Repent. And thus much of External Worship, which I told you consists in Preaching, and Hearing, in Invocation, and the reverent use of the Sacraments.

The other part of his Service, is, Internal; that is, the worship of the Spirit, without which all our Preaching, Hearing, Praying, Christning, and Communicating, are but like a Sepulcher outwardly, beautiful; but inwardly, full of corruption: for though the outward Form is that which approves us to Man; yet it is the inward frame that justifies us to God. Who does not like such Professors as *\*Hosea* compares to a half baked Cake; and *Ezekiel* to a Pot, whose scum is therein: For God is a Spirit, and He will, nay, He must be worshipt in Spirit and Truth.

*\*cap. 7.8.  
cap. 24.6.  
Joh. 4.24.*

Some there are, who, with *Esop's* Dog, snatch at the shadow, and lose the substance; that is, place the whole worship of God in bodily Exercise, and external Adoration;



tion; as bowing before a Crucifix, in creeping to a Cross, in running a Bare-leg'd Pilgrimage, in visiting the Reliques of the Saints, in hearing of so many Masses, in macerating the Flesh, in hanging down the head for a day like a Bulrush, in Crosses, and Candles, in Holy Waters, and Holy Oyls, in Pixes, and Paxes, and such like fripperies.

And there are others, who (like *Lipwings*, make the greatest noise when they are farthest from their young ones) though they pretend the greatest distance from the Papists, yet come very near them in many things, and place their whole Religion in running through thick and thin, three or four Miles on a Sunday to hear a Man preach, or rather prate nonsense; in carrying a Bible under their Arms, though they neither understand it, nor draw any Inferences from it, for the amendment of their lives and practices: In condemning all as Reprobates, that are not of their own Communion, and in applying the intricate and mysterious places of Scripture, especially such as denounce God's Judgments, to those that are not of their own perswasion. And if they can but prate like Parrots in the Scripture phrase, and sing three or four Psalms upon a Lords Day, and repeat at night the nonsense they heard in the morning; nay, if they commend the Preacher for bawling lowd, and making wry faces, and thumping the Pulpit; and holding forth for two or three hours, and preaching off Book such stuff as is impossible for a considering Person to write; they conclude they have worship'd God sufficiently, and that no more is required of them. And truly though this is very far from being acceptable to God, yet I wish we had not too just cause, on the other hand, to complain, that internal Worship is too much slighted by us, and Prayers and Sacraments too much neglected; and that as in times of Popery all Religion and Worship was in a manner reduced to a Mass, so now amongst us to a Sermon, *they seeing without understanding*, and we hearing without practising.

Thus much for the first particular, to wit, the Act; which I have spoken of the external and internal Worship due to God. I now proceed to the second particular in the Confession; and that is the Object of his Worship, *the God of my Fathers.*

Observe no Saint, nor Angel, no Creature, nor Throne, no Dominion, nor Power, no Heathenish Deity, but the only true God in Jesus Christ. *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* And, *See thou do it not* (saith the Angel in the Revelations to St. John;) *I am thy fellow creature, Worship God!*

The *Manichees* worship'd two Gods, a God of Good and a God of Evil; and the *Pitheists* three Gods, whence they had their Name; the *Valentinians* worship'd thirty couple of Gods; and the *Gentiles*, as St. *Austin* observes thirty thousand Gods; thence they worship'd their Adulterous *Jupiter*, their Beastly *Apollo*, their Drunken *Bacchus*, their Bastardly *Æsculapius*, their Thievish *Mercury*, their Bloody *Mars*, their Impudent *Venus*, and their Spiteful *Juno*; as *Zanchy* observes. And the Papists have equall'd; if not exceeded, the Heathens in the number of their Gods, and their superstitious Ceremonies; as may appear by the practice of the common people in these particulars.

1. The *Pagans* had their several tutelar Gods for several places; for *Delphos* worshiped *Apollo*, *Crete*, *Jupiter*, *Athen*, *Minerva*, and *Ephesus* *Diana*: And so in Popery, *England* worship'd St. *George*, *Scotland* St. *Andrew*, *Ireland* St. *Patrick*, *Venice* St. *Mark*, and *Milain* St. *Ambrose*.

2. In Paganism they had several Gods for several Elements; as *Jupiter* for the Fire, *Juno* for the Air, and *Neptune* for the Sea: And so in Popery, they have *Agathus* for the Fire, the *Theadulus* for Tempests, St. *Barbara* for Thunder, and St. *Nicholas* for the Sea.

3. In Paganism they had several Gods to pray to for their Cattel, and their Fruit; as *Pan* for the one, *Ceres* for the



the other, and *Bacchus* for their Wine: and so in Popery they have *Urbanus* for their Wine, *Jodocus* for their Fruit, *Wandelinus* for their Sheep, *Eulogius* for their Horses, and *St. Anthony* for their Pigs.

4. In Paganism several Professions had several Gods to Pray to; as Scholars *Apollo*, Soldiers *Mars*, Smiths *Vulcan*, and Hunters *Diana*: so in Popery, Scholars have *St. Gregory*, Soldiers *St. George*, Smiths *St. Loy*, and Shoemakers *St. Crispin*.

5. In Paganism they had several Gods to pray to in several Diseases; as *Apollo* for the Plague, *Hercules* for the Falling-Sickness, and *Lucina* for Women in Childbirth; and so in Popery, *St. Roch* for the Plague, *Petronella* for the Ague, *Apollonia* for the Tooth-ach, *Anastasis* for the Head-ach.

Lastly, To these, both *Pagans* and *Papists* build Churches, erect Altars, ordain Priests, appoint Festivals, set up Statues, and burn Candles, as *Misculus* observes; they did not learn this from our Apostle, the sole Object of whose religious Worship was the God of his Fathers; that is, the God whom his Fathers Worship'd.

There can be nothing more opprobriously objected in Religion than Novelty; *There are a People who have made Laws of their own*, said *Haman* of the Jews, and the *Areopagites* of *St. Paul*, *Let us hear what new Doctrine this is*: for Innovation diminishes the venerable Authority of Religion: and therefore it is the Politicians Rule, not to remove an ill custom when well settled: the very Names of our Fathers and Predecessors sway much; for the Woman of *Samaria*, you know, alledged the example of her Fathers against Gods Commands; *Our Fathers*, says she, *Worship'd in this Mountain*; but our Saviour tells her, *Salvation is of the Jews*. And the *Gentiles* excepted against Christianity, because they would not condemn the wayes of their Fathers; but keep to, and preserve those Rites which descended to them from age to age; and the Hereticks

Comm.in.  
Psal. 16.

Esth. 3. 8.

Act. 17.

19.

Joh. 4. 20.



ticks themselves, to gain credit to their Tenents, were used to say, so I have received; so I have been taught by the Fathers.

And the Romanists no not object any thing more maliciously, and falsely, to the ignorant amongst us, than that we had our Religion only from *Luther*, and *Calvin*, (which they themselves cannot but know in their Consciences to be otherwise) and that we swerve from the Judgment of the Primitive Fathers, and exclude our Predecessors from all hope of Salvation. But notwithstanding that they brag the Fathers are all theirs, like the Madman that challenged all the Ships that came into the Harbour for his own; yet it is evident to any one, that is but meanly conversant in reading their Authors; that they esteem the Fathers but as Counters, which at play are sometimes placed for Pounds, and sometimes for Pence; for where they seem to favour them, they commend and admire them; and where they are clear against them, they decry and despise them. Otherwise, if the Fathers are theirs, and if they would have us believe they are their principal Witnesses, Why do they cut out their Tongues with their false glosses, and expurgations of what they do not like?

2. The Examples of our Progenitors, or Predecessors, are no infallible rules for us to follow; for we must not with the Pharisees transgress the commands of God by the tradition of our Fathers.

Mat. 15.

3.

Jerem.

44. 17.

Jerem.

9. 14.

Psal. 49.

19.

We must not, with the Jews, Offer Sacrifice to the Queen of Heaven, because our Fathers did so, and it was well with them. Why did the Land perish, and was burnt up like a Wilderness? But because the people walked after Baalim, which their Fathers taught them. Therefore the Prophet sayes, Walk not in the ways of your Fathers; and they follow the generation of their Fathers, which shall not see the light.

3. We do not make the case of our Fore-Fathers, that lived in Popery, so desperate as they represent it; for we do not

not question, but many of them held firm the Foundation, though much *Hay* and *Stubble* was built upon it: for though they might be forc'd by terror, or induced by sleight, to partake of the common errors of the Church of *Rome*; yet they might be free from its *Hereſie*, and hold the Faith implicitly in *preparatione animi*, that is, be ready to embrace it, when God ſhould reveal it to them.

4. God might illuminate whom he pleas'd by his Spirit in thoſe times of darkneſs, when the means of Knowledge was wanting, (which is not now in this Sun ſhine of the *Gospel*, to be expected) as he enlightned the world by an expanded Light before he created the Sun, which is ſince the ordinary way of giving Light; and as he fed the *Iſraelites* with *Manna* in the Wilderneſs, which he withdrew as ſoon as they came into the Land of Promiſe. For when ordinary means are afforded, extraordinary muſt neither be expected, nor relied upon: ſo that you ſee there is a vaſt difference between the caſe of our Forefathers, and the caſe of the Papiſt now; who wilfully ſhut their eyes againſt the Light offered to them. When the ordinary means fail'd, God was able to ſave, and did ſave in the midſt of that Blindneſs, thoſe that belonged to the Election of his Grace: But it cannot be therefore ſafe for us to neglect ſo great Salvation as is now offered to us, upon pretence of our Forefathers being otherwiſe principled.

If my Predeceſſors, ſayes St. Cyprian, have not taught, or held, either through ſimplicity, or ignorance, that which our Lord has taught them, by his Example, or Authority, the Mercy of God might pardon them; but we cannot rely upon the like Mercy, who have ſo clear a propoſal of thoſe Truths, which were concealed from them. It is indeed good manners, and charity, to think, hope, and ſpeak well of our Fathers; but it is both Wiſdom and Divinity to look well to our ſelves.

Cypriani  
Ep. 63. p.  
156. E-  
dit. Oxon.  
Si quis de  
Anteceſſo-  
ribus no-  
ſtris, vel  
ignoran-  
ter, vel  
ſimplici-  
ter, hoc  
non obſer-  
vaverit,  
&c.

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I with the Dissenters from our Church would seriously apply this to themselves; if they did, they must find their case much worse than their Predecessors, because they at once tread out of their wayes, and walk no more ours. I am sure this disorderly tumultuous way of serving God, which the Separatists use, was never practised by any considerable party in the Primitive Times. tho' I will not deny but several National Churches may differ from one another in their Forms of Worship; I never read nor heard of any who had not a Form which they did Worship, until our modern Presbyterians. This one instance (I fancy) that they cannot pretend to the custom of their Fathers, for what they do, unless they will own none for such that lived above sixty years ago) might be sufficient to make them at the same instant to leave off, and forsake their folly. And I am persuaded that there are not any considerable Persons amongst them, but if they did seriously reflect, and calmly consider, how great a sin it is to make a Schism, and separate from that Church, with which they own they agree in Doctrine, and is Established by Law, for they know not what reason, but because they will I say, if they did think on this, and sadly reflect that whatever the Church of *England* either has ready, or may hereafter suffer through Popery, is wholly due to themselves; for having murdered the best Kings, and forc'd his Royal Issue to seek for safety in great necessities in Popish Countries, and thereby exposed them to the dangers and temptations of the *misshapen* Clergy, who never fail to improve all opportunities for the Advantage of the Church, or rather Court of *Rome*: I say, if they did think on this, they would now, at least, being so very obnoxious, for their preservation, close with us in our Communion, and not separate from that manner of Worship which we give to the God of our Fathers, with the Apostles here on Earth.



Text, which was the object, and the second thing I was to speak of, and leads me to the manner of his *worship*, which is the third particular, in these words, *after that way which they call Heresie.*

Whence we may first observe, that it is no new thing for Religion, and the Professors thereof, to be traduced: for Christ was scofft at as a *Carpenters Son*; and Christianity is called *Heresie*, and Christians *Gallileans*; and this proceeds from the innate Malice and Ignorance that every Man has in him since the Fall; which, as the Spider extracts poison out of the sweetest Flowers, makes the worst interpretations of the best things and actions; so that if *David* dance zealously before the Ark, he shall not want a *Michol* to laugh at him: <sup>2 Sam. 6. 14, 15, 16</sup> and if *Ezekiah* destroy Idolatry, some *Rabshchekah* will not stick to say, *Is not this the God whose Altars Ezekiah broke down.* If *Mary Magdalen* pour a little Oyl on the Head and Feet of our Saviour, some *Judas* will be ready to say, *what needs this waste.* <sup>Joh. 12. 4.</sup> *Constantine*, for his bounty to the Church shall be called *Pupillus*, one that needs a Guardian; and *Theodosius* for his piety *Imbellis*, a Coward: But as the Moon goes on silently in her course, tho' Dogs do bark at her, so let us go on in our Religious Worship, without regarding the calumniations of our Adversaries.

2. Observe, That if we be morally certain, that what we profess is true, and according to God's Word, it matters not that the Papists call us Hereticks, and the Separatists call us Papists; Truth will justify it self. *St. Paul* you see is not offended that they call his Religion Heresie.

And this brings me to the fourth thing in the Text, namely, the Rule, in these words, *Believing all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets.* God, who requires man to worship him, has prescribed a Rule for his direction: and lest this Rule might be forgotten

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or corrupted in tract of time by a bare oral Tradition of from age to age, he committed it to Writing; for though the Word spoken be more efficacious, yet the Word written is more durable: therefore it was that *Moses* was commanded to write the moral Law in two Tables; and that the Spirit in the *Revelations* sayes write; and here *St. Paul* makes the Rule of his Faith, *all that is written in the Law and the Prophets.*

It would not be proper now to dispute whether it be necessary to salvation, for a man to believe all that is written in the Old and New Testaments; and therefore I shall only ( for resolving this doubt, and many other Objections, that may follow thereupon ) offer these few particulars.

1. That every distinct sentence of the holy Scripture does command and require our Belief as much as the whole, or any one part of them.

2. That though a man may be saved without knowing all that is contained in the Scriptures, yet if he refuse to give credit to any part of them (when it is revealed to him as such ) he cannot be saved.

3. That every man is not only obliged under pain of Damnation, to believe all that is Scripture, when revealed to him; but he is also bound to believe what is not revealed to him in preparation of mind.

4. That we may and ought to infer from *St. Paul's* words in the Text, that the Scriptures are a sufficient Rule of Faith, and that there is enough contained in them, without any other additions, both for our Direction and Practice.

Yet I deny not, but that an undoubted Tradition, we were so well assured of the truth of it, by a general consent of all Ages, as we are of the truth of the Scriptures, has the same Authority with Scripture; for until the means of Salvation was fully perfected, and the

Scripture

Scriptures committed to Writing, Tradition was the Rule: For St. Paul bids *Timothy* to *take heed to all that he had received, either by word or Writing*. And though we do not, with the *Romanists*, allow Tradition to supplant the Scriptures, by giving it equal Authority with them; yet we allow much to an Apostolical Tradition: because it may be necessary, though not absolutely so, to the clearing and better understanding of some intricate and mysterious passages in Scripture. And this leads me to the fifth particular in my Text, to wit, the principal ground of his Confession, in these words, *and have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust*.

From which we may first observe, That Prudence and Wisdom are consistent with true Religion; for you see St. Paul says, *which they themselves also allow*; that is, the *Pharisees*, who did believe a Resurrection; that by this means he might gain their favourable Opinion; and so divide them and the *Sadduces*, who did deny a Resurrection. For God never gave a man Religion with design to deprive him of the use of his Reason, and to make him a meer Natural: He that charges his Disciples to be *as innocent as Doves*, bids them be *as wise as Serpents*, and bids them to *beware of men that will bring them into their Councils*; which shews that we must not, with the *Donatists* of old, and the *Quakers* now, court the Lash and the Prison, and seek for occasions of trouble: He only is the resolute Champion for *Christ*, that will neither for fear of suffering, weakly betray his Cause, nor out of an ignorant Zeal, run into needless dangers.

2. We may observe from hence, that the hope of the Resurrection of the dead is a most powerful Argument to perswade men to believe, embrace and practice the Christian Religion. For when a man seriously considers that he is not only to give an account here of what he



has done, and that this life does not set a period to his sufferings, or rejoycings; but that he shall rise again, and undergo a new and impartial tryal, and be for ever determined to live in eternal bliss or misery. This consideration (I say) as it will make every rational (not mention pious) man to live holily; so it will be a great allay to his temporal sufferings, to consider that he shall have *joy in the morning* of his Resurrection, *for the heaviness he endured in the night* of this life: This was the ground of St. Paul's free and publick confession of his Faith: And thus I come to speak of the last particular in the Text, namely the effects, in these words, *And here do I exercise my self to have a Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards Man.*

Whence we may observe, that the end of all Religion and Knowledg is practice: for Christianity is an active life, is not to make a wry Face, and to put on a serious look, and to talk piously, and to breath nothing but Scripture, that denominates a man a true Believer; but it is an exercising of ones self so, as to keep a clear Conscience towards God and Man. And therefore it is that St. Paul elsewhere exhorts *to press forwards*, and so to *run* as to *win*, and not to *beat the Air*. And our Saviour bids *bring forth Works meet for repentance*. And that we may do this, we must live unblameably towards God, our Neighbours, and our selves. If we be defective in the last two, we must also be faulty in the first; because though there are some offences more directly and immediately committed against God, than other; yet all are against him; For as much as they are transgressions of his Laws: And therefore we must make it our chief business; First to give him his due, which is honouring and invoking his name, acknowledge all we have to proceed from his free Grace; and make him as far as we are able suitable returns of Praise and Thanksgiving: and

as we must behave our selves thus towards God, so we must deal uprightly with our Neighbours, we must carry Honoy in our mouths, that is, not injure them with false reports, nor provoke them with bitter language, and we must carry Charity in our hands, that is, relieve them to our power, when their necessities require it, not wrong them by Violence or Fraud, not exact upon their necessities; and we must carry a good example in all our actions. And lastly, as to our selves, we must take heed that we abuse not those parts and indowments which God gave us to be instrumental to his service, by any kind of excess, riot, or intemperance; we must keep our senses well governed in great equality. The Tongue under the rule of discretion, and the Heart in a firm peace, free from all sensual distracting thoughts; this is the true end of believing: otherwise our assenting to a divine Truth, is no more than such a faith as the Devils have, who *believe and tremble*, and are never the nearer happiness: but our believing must include doing, and must carry along with it a *conscience* or knowledge *void of offence, both towards God and towards Man*. And thus I have spoken what I designed at this time on this Subject, and shall conclude all with one word of Application. You have heard St. Paul's Confession of Faith: I beseech you examine yourselves, and try whether you be of his Religion or not; if you be, I entreat you practise it.

2. If you have a clear Conscience, you need not regard the false reports of others; for though it be a misfortune to be undeservedly ill spoken of, yet it is a comfort that it is undeservedly. The Bird in the Breast makes sweeter Musick than the Praises of a thousand Falterers. *I am greived (saith a Father) that they speak ill of me, and asperse me falsely; because they injure themselves, and not me, by their uncharitableness; for they cannot rob me of the pleasure which a clear Conscience continually administers to me.*

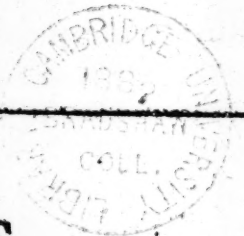
Lastly,

Lastly, That all of us may have this clear Conscience  
 let us be sure, with St. *Paul* to walk by the Rule, t  
*Psalm 119.* Word of God ; that will be a *Lanthorn to thy feet, and*  
 105. *Light to thy paths*: and therefore do not imagine, th  
 the carrying of your Bible to Church, and turning ov  
 the leaves, and reading it carelessly, is all that is requir  
 of you ; but be sure you practise what you read, an  
 compare your actions with that Rule, and make the  
 conformable to it : this will make you not only Profe  
 sors of St. *Paul's* Faith, but also partakers of his Happiness  
 where we shall see the Face of the living God clearly  
 and at the full, where the Beauties shall have no Veil  
 to hide them from our eyes, our Beings shall have no end  
 our Knowledge shall not be subject to error, nor our Love  
 to displeasure. O ! what an excess of happiness will  
 be, to enjoy all, and to desire nothing, to be a King  
 without an Enemy, to be rich without Covetousness, an  
 to be ever living without fear of Death ; all which, God  
 of his infinite Mercy vouchsafe unto us all, through th  
 merits of Jesus Christ ; to whom, with the Father, an  
 the holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and fo  
 ever. *Amen.*

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